

SPEECH OF

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008

- Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, this year marks the 350th anniversary of the founding of Charles County , Maryland, one of the five counties I have the privilege of representing in the United States Congress. I rise today to congratulate the county on this milestone and to pay tribute to its citizens--individuals who have made it such an inviting place to live, work, and visit.

- One of Maryland's oldest counties , Charles County was chartered in 1658 and named in honor of Charles Calvert, the 3rd Lord of Baltimore and a royal proprietor of the Colony of Maryland. Since its establishment, the county and its residents have played an important role in shaping the development of our State and the history of our Nation.

- From its earliest days, Charles County served as a center of commerce for the region. Port Tobacco, one of the oldest English settlements in North America, was the home of Maryland's second largest port and seat of the Charles County government prior to its move to La Plata.

- Charles County was the birthplace of several of our Nation's Founding Fathers. Thomas Stone, a member of the Continental Congress and one of Maryland's four signers of the Declaration of Independence, was born in Charles County . His home, Habre de Venture, still stands and is a unit of the National Park Service. His uncle, Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, was a Delegate to the Constitutional Convention. John Hanson, a long serving member of the Maryland assembly and the first President of the United States in Congress Assembled under a fully ratified Articles of Confederation, was born at Port Tobacco.

- Residents of Charles County witnessed the landing of British troops in Benedict during the War of 1812. During the Civil War, Camp Stanton was established in Benedict for the purpose of recruiting and training African-American men for the Union Army. Following the war, John Wilkes Booth, assassin of President Lincoln, traveled through Charles County stopping at the home of Dr. Samuel Mudd to have his broken leg set--on his escape from Washington, DC.

- Charles County was also the birthplace of Josiah Henson who was born a slave, escaped to Canada and later wrote his autobiography which is believed to have inspired Harriet Beecher Stowe's ``Uncle Tom's Cabin." Matthew Henson, who accompanied Admiral Robert Peary on several Arctic expeditions, including the discovery of the North Pole, was also a native of Charles County . Henson, who was likely the first man to reach the spot, planted the American flag at the North Pole.

- Today, Charles County continues to make history. It is home to important Federal agencies, including the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head Division which was established in 1890 and is the international leader in energetic research and development. Recently, scientists and researchers at Indian Head developed, in short order, the thermobaric ``cave busting" bomb to combat terrorists abroad.

- Charles County offers its residents scenic rural areas, wildlife habitats, and waterfront views with convenient access to the Washington metropolitan area and the Federal Government which helps it live up to its motto of ``Where Eagles Fly." With a vibrant and robust business climate, coupled with its hardworking and dedicated residents, Charles County has strong appeal and has become one of the most diverse communities in Maryland and one of the wealthiest for its size in the Nation.

- I am proud to represent Charles County in the U.S. Congress and congratulate its current County Commissioners--Commissioner Wayne Cooper, President; Commissioner Edith Patterson, Vice President; Commissioner Rueben Collins, Commissioner Gary Hodge, and Commissioner Samuel Graves as they celebrate this great milestone. Congratulations Charles County on your 350th anniversary and may your citizens have continued prosperity for years to come.